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LETTER DATED 11 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the statement issued by the Burundi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation concerning the allegations made by Amnesty International in a report published on 15 July 1997 regarding what it calls the Government of Burundi's policy of forcibly rounding up the Hutu population.

I take this opportunity to transmit to you for your further information the opening statement from the press conference held by His Excellency Mr. Luc Rukingama, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi, at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 July 1997.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gamaliel NDARUZANIYE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex I

[Original: French]

Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation at Bujumbura on 8 August 1997

1. In a report published on 15 July 1997, Amnesty International has once again misled the international community regarding what it calls the Government of Burundi's policy of forcibly rounding up the Hutu population.

2. Based on this document, which is clearly inspired by circles hostile to the ongoing peace process in Burundi, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation would like to recall the following:

3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation regrets that so prestigious an organization as Amnesty International should go along with a few politicians who would like to make a mockery of any measure the Government takes to protect citizens, at a time when peace and security are beginning to be restored in the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation would like to recall that there has never been any policy of forcibly rounding up the population in Burundi. The people have always come together spontaneously in their efforts to flee from the violent armed bands which Amnesty International has been careful not to condemn. The Government has a duty to protect the displaced populations so as to prevent any massacres and pogroms of the type that occurred in, for example, Teza, Bugendana and Buta.

4. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation would also like to denounce Amnesty International's tendency to try to divide the war victims even in their misfortune. For the Government of Burundi there are no lucky ones among the displaced persons, no fortunate ones among those who have been scattered, nor are any of those who have come together better off than the others; there are simply Burundi victims of the war although those intent on spreading propaganda seek to divide them according to the old ethnic categories. They all need assistance and the Government is doing everything within its power, without making any distinction.

5. Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation would like to appeal for objectivity in Amnesty International's reports. It supports the noble cause of safeguarding human rights in the world in general and in Burundi in particular. The rounding up of the population following the crisis is therefore a response to the pressing need to uphold that noblest of all rights: the right to life.

It is also a temporary situation, for in those places where security has been restored all these victims are beginning to return to their homes. That, for example, is what is happening in a few villages in Kayanza and Karusi provinces. For what the politicians who hunger for popularity do not say is that the armed bands which have been roaming the hills in recent times have

decimated everything within their path, including the animals; this made it essential to have a programme for the protection of all the threatened population.

Annex II

[Original: English]

Press conference of the Minister of External Relations and Cooperation of Burundi at United Nations Headquarters on 15 July 1997

Supporting the peace process in Burundi

One of the main objectives that the Transitional Government is committed to achieving, as was made public in a statement on 25 July 1996, is to set up a strong basis for lasting peace through the implementation of a peace process sustained by dialogue and for which the ultimate goal is to build up national institutions by consensus.

The decision to launch a positive dialogue with all social and political forces, including armed groups, constitutes an act of sovereignty that does not bear any external pressure. The peace process thus means to be inclusive and open to all, namely the Government, the Parliament, the political parties, civil society and armed groups.

1. Organizing the peace process

1.1. A national debate will be organized in order to prepare the population psychologically for negotiations. The first stage has come to an end and the second stage will start soon. In this context, the delegates of the population will deal with all fundamental issues.

1.2. Peace conferences will be organized both in the country and abroad in order to give Burundians who live in the country and abroad the opportunity to exchange their views on controversial issues.

1.3. A political dialogue open to all parties will be organized in cooperation with regional and international mediation. These negotiations will be open to all parties. It is understood that this stage will start with the cessation of hostilities and will be marked by the writing of a new constitution. It is expected that the new constitution will provide the necessary guarantees for the protection and smooth running of the national institutions, security for all, the eradication of the ideology of genocide, and will ensure democratic governance and human rights. It will be concluded by a general peace accord.

However, it is worth noting that for the peace process to succeed a favourable environment is required that is propitious to dialogue.

2. Creating favourable conditions for dialogue

2.1. Removing the stumbling block of the economic sanctions

The economic blockade that a number of neighbouring countries imposed illegally on Burundi as early as 31 July 1996 has been a great hindrance to the first stages of the peace process. The extreme impoverishment of the Burundian population, which has been severely deprived of all essential commodities, such as medicines, food, fertilizers, seeds and fuel, has led the people to become resistant to and sceptical of the proposed peace process.

Furthermore, the economic sanctions have deprived the Government of the necessary means to make the country operational.

On the humanitarian, social and economic side, the country has almost collapsed.

As a consequence, the Government of Burundi expresses its eager demand that the international community exert pressure so that this economic blockade, which benefits only a few while it strikes very severely at the most vulnerable groups of society, will be lifted completely.

In the meantime, the Arusha IV Heads of State's Summit decision to ease the sanctions should be implemented thoroughly and immediately.

2.2. Controlling terrorist groups

The terrorist and genocidal gangs, which have caused death and spread distress and have indiscriminately slaughtered innocent women, elders and children, make use of some neighbouring countries as their rear-base. The gangs, which are comprised of members of the Conseil national de défense de la démocratie (CNDD), the notorious Interahamwe militia and the former Rwandan and Zairean forces and are devastating the whole of the Great Lakes region, should be monitored and made harmless. To that end, the international community should play a decisive role.

2.3. Setting up communication and dialogue channels with neighbouring countries

We expect the United Republic of Tanzania, as a neighbour, to allow the Burundi Embassy in Dar es Salaam to work normally and thus facilitate diplomatic communications. For the past year our diplomatic mission has been under occupation by CNDD terrorist and genocidal groups in violation of all rules and laws. We lock forward to the implementation by the Tanzanian authority of its commitments to that end.

2.4. Launching an international tribunal for Burundi

More than 150,000 people have been slaughtered since October 1993 solely because of their ethnic origin or political affiliation.

An international commission of inquiry was sent to Burundi and confirmed that acts of genocide had been committed in Burundi. As a consequence, many

international observers have recommended the creation of an international tribunal for Burundi. The Government of Burundi has also made several requests to the United Nations.

In order to ensure the eradication of impunity, to punish the heinous crime against mankind which is genocide, to build a viable base for the current peace process, the Government of Burundi makes an urgent appeal for the creation of an international tribunal for Burundi.

3. Providing the necessary assistance to the peace process

Needless to say, the national economy was bled dry by the combined effects of the four-year crisis and an unprecedented economic blockade. The international community, which has tirelessly expressed concern and provided assistance to Burundi, should help the country decisively in the humanitarian field for reconstruction and through cooperation for economic revival and development.

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PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN ANGOLA (MONUA)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 1118 (1997) of 30 June 1997, by which the Council, inter alia, requested me to report by 15 August 1997 on developments in the Angolan peace process. The present report covers major developments since my last report, dated 5 June 1997 (S/1997/438).

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. During the past two and one-half months, the Angolan peace process continued to experience serious difficulties. In view of the deteriorating military situation and the continued delays in the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol (S/1994/1441, annex), I addressed letters on 3 July 1997 to the President of Angola, Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, and to the leader of the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA), Mr. Jonas Savimbi, expressing my serious concern at the increase in tensions in the north-eastern provinces and at the delay in the extension of State administration throughout the country. I also drew their attention to the provisions of Security Council resolution 1118 (1997) and encouraged President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi to meet, within the national territory of Angola, in order to remove the remaining obstacles to the earliest completion of the Lusaka Protocol. I urged them both to exercise maximum restraint and called on UNITA, in particular, to abide by its commitments under the Protocol.

3. My Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, in close collaboration with the representatives of the three observer States (Portugal, the Russian Federation and the United States of America), held intensive consultations with President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi, as well as with high-ranking representatives of the Government and UNITA, to defuse the prevailing tensions that were starting to spread to various parts of the country. The Joint Commission held frequent meetings to review the status of implementation of the peace process, and on numerous occasions appealed to the parties, especially

UNITA, to respect the ceasefire and implement their commitments under the Lusaka Protocol.

4. At the initiative of Mr. Savimbi, a meeting was held on 18 July in Bailundo, at which my Special Representative and the representatives of the observer States conveyed in strong terms the deep concern of the international community regarding the continued stalling by UNITA in fulfilling its commitments. The UNITA leader finally promised to submit to the United Nations specific information on the strength and locations of his security detachment and on the so-called "mining police", but denied the existence in Angola of any UNITA troops that had recently crossed into the country. He further promised to submit to the United Nations proposals on the resumption of the normalization of State administration and to send a letter to President dos Santos with regard to their long-awaited meeting. He also pledged to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel and staff of non-governmental organizations.

5. Mr. Savimbi subsequently addressed a letter to President dos Santos, reiterating in general terms the commitment of UNITA to the Lusaka Protocol and promising to comply with Security Council resolution 1118 (1997). He also called for the establishment of a working group to prepare for the meeting between himself and the President. On 21 July 1997, his representative submitted to the Joint Commission documents containing information on the number, location and weapons in the possession of armed elements remaining under UNITA control, as well as a proposal on the normalization of State administration. However, as was noted in the joint statement made by my Special Representative and the representatives of the three observer States, the data and proposals submitted by UNITA were neither complete nor credible and could therefore not be accepted. Thus, UNITA was asked to review its position and submit credible and verifiable data and viable proposals. On 23 July, the President of the Security Council issued a statement (S/PRST/1997/39), in which the Council expressed deep concern at recent destabilizing actions in Angola, in particular the failure of UNITA to comply with resolution 1118 (1997).

6. On 24 July 1997, as part of his regular consultations, my Special Representative met with President dos Santos for an extensive review of the peace process. The Special Representative reiterated to the President the provisions of Security Council resolutions, in particular the need for the Government to refrain from any use of force and to notify MONUA of troop movements by the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). Regarding the meeting with Mr. Savimbi, the President stated that its agenda must focus on vital issues of national interest and not on those already dealt with in the context of the Lusaka Protocol or previous meetings, and that all commitments made earlier by the parties must be fully respected.

7. On 4 August 1997, my Special Representative and the representatives of the observer States reviewed the new programme for the normalization of State administration throughout Angola, which had been submitted by UNITA the previous day, but found the proposals unacceptable. In this connection, the Special Representative and the troika stressed once again that it was imperative that UNITA provide credible data concerning the numbers and locations of armed elements under its control, and expressed their grave concern at the inaction of

UNITA in fulfilling the demands contained in Security Council resolution 1118 (1997) and the presidential statement of 23 July. They also emphasized that making the requested information available on the eve of the forthcoming meeting of the Security Council would not be acceptable.

8. Since my last report to the Council, no significant progress has been made in the normalization of State administration throughout Angola owing to the lack of cooperation on the part of UNITA, which until recently was attempting to link the resumption of this process with improvement in the overall military situation. It should be noted that, although the Government had declared its intention to resume the functions of normalization throughout the country on 25 July 1997, it has so far refrained from taking unilateral measures in this regard.

9. On 8 August 1997, in a meeting held in New York with the Under-Secretaries-General for Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations, the Angolan Vice-Minister for Territorial Administration, General Higino Carneiro, and the Adviser to the President, Ambassador Victor Lima, stressed that the Government had no intention of resorting to military action unless it was forced to defend itself. The visiting delegation believed that the use of military force would have a negative effect on the peace process, and would not solve the long-standing conflict in Angola.

10. The long-awaited transformation of UNITA's radio VORGAN into a non-partisan station has not progressed, despite the repeated promises of UNITA to find a mutually acceptable solution to the issue of frequencies to be allocated to the radio station. Regrettably, after some reduction in hostile propaganda, there has recently been a noticeable increase in such broadcasts, particularly by UNITA. Accusations and counter-accusations, coupled with unfounded rumours and inflammatory public pronouncements, have further aggravated the already highly charged political atmosphere.

11. Some of the propaganda broadcast over radio VORGAN was aimed at United Nations staff and other international personnel working in Angola. There have been several instances of physical attacks against MONUA personnel and staff of non-governmental organizations, despite assurances by Mr. Savimbi and repeated public statements by the political organs of UNITA that these actions would cease. Furthermore, restrictions on the movement of MONUA observers in several strategic areas, particularly by UNITA, but in some cases also by the FAA, have prevented the Mission from fully carrying out its verification and observation tasks.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

A. Observance of the ceasefire

12. The military situation is currently characterized by persistent tensions affecting almost the entire country, but in particular the provinces of Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul and Malange. During the reporting period, the mobilization of troops and military equipment, conscription and an increase in hostile propaganda continued to be registered. Reports were received and verified of

several attacks by UNITA on Government positions, including in Lunda Norte province, as well as of attacks by some elements of FAA and the Civil Defence Corps on villages in Huíla province. The most serious of these attacks, which were perpetrated by UNITA in Lunda Norte at Posto de Fronteira Nordeste on 2 July and at Posto de Fronteira Muaquesse on 24 July 1997, were subsequently condemned by the Joint Commission. In the former incident, UNITA forces razed to the ground a village of approximately 150 inhabitants, while the latter attack resulted in the death of several civilians and the burning of houses. Large-scale last-minute changes in the destination of demobilized ex-UNITA troops and the renewed recruitment and deployment of these personnel at strategic locations controlled by UNITA, such as Dambi near Uíge, Cuima and Vinte Cinco in the area of Huambo, and Gungue near Caconda, underline the gravity of the deteriorating situation.

13. The theft in July 1997 of 300 kilograms of explosives belonging to a demining brigade at Cazombo in a zone controlled by UNITA, and the landing of over 120 flights between 1 and 30 July at UNITA-controlled airstrips scattered throughout the central and eastern parts of the country, which MONUA was not allowed to verify, are clear indications of extensive military preparations. Planting of new mines in UNITA-controlled areas has also been reported. On the Saurimo-Cacolo road, which had been extensively used, a civilian vehicle detonated an anti-tank mine on 4 July, resulting in the death of three people and the injury of many others. Demining experts who visited the scene discovered that the mine had been recently planted.

14. Both parties, but especially UNITA, have continued to impose restrictions on MONUA verification activities. The Government sometimes failed to provide information on the movement of their troops and military equipment and on several occasions prevented United Nations military observers from conducting inspections. UNITA has on various occasions restricted MONUA personnel from conducting their activities, including at Calibuitchi on 11 and 12 July, when a MONUA investigation team was detained for over 24 hours by armed UNITA personnel. Another serious case of restriction of movement by UNITA occurred on 12 July, when a United Nations team was prevented from investigating allegations that UNITA was storing weapons in eight containers at Chingongo. In addition, there have been several cases of harassment of MONUA personnel by UNITA at team sites and at selection and demobilization centres.

B. Accomplishment of military tasks

15. With regard to the fulfilment of pressing military tasks, after seven months of delaying tactics, UNITA finally submitted to MONUA on 21 July 1997 information regarding Mr. Savimbi's security guard and the so-called "mining police", citing the total strength of both forces as 2,963 personnel. It should be noted that, in an address to the National Assembly in July 1997, the Angolan Minister of Defence asserted that UNITA had some 35,000 armed personnel under its control. Having considered the above information in detail, my Special Representative and the representatives of the observer States issued a statement on 22 July rejecting the information provided by UNITA, on the grounds that it was neither complete nor credible. They stressed the need for UNITA to provide credible and verifiable information as called for by the Lusaka Protocol and

Security Council resolution 1118 (1997). On 11 August, UNITA provided MONUA with additional information regarding the strength of the armed personnel still under its control. This information is currently being analysed by MONUA in consultation with the observer States. It should be recalled that the demilitarization by UNITA of its forces constitutes a fundamental commitment under the Protocol, but as a result of these inadmissible delays, the disarmament and demobilization of the UNITA troops that have not yet been registered with the United Nations has not begun. Thus, one of the main provisions of the Lusaka Protocol remains unfulfilled.

16. On 10 July 1997, the Government held a ceremony in Luanda to mark the completion of the formation of the FAA. General "Ben Ben", the Deputy Chief of Staff of the FAA and a former senior commanding officer of UNITA, participated in the ceremony, which was also attended by the UNITA delegation to the Joint Commission. A total of 10,899 UNITA troops, including generals and other senior officers, have been incorporated into the FAA. This number, however, falls far short of the originally planned figure of 26,300 UNITA personnel who were expected to be incorporated into the national armed forces.

C. Status of the military component of MONUA

17. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 1118 (1997), the Security Council requested that, in implementing the scheduled withdrawal of United Nations military units, I continue to take into account the situation on the ground and progress achieved in completion of the remaining aspects of the peace process. In view of the above, and having in mind the serious deterioration of the military situation on the ground, I have decided, upon the recommendation of Mr. Beye and the MONUA Force Commander, to further adjust the drawdown of the Mission's military units. As a result, although the Brazilian infantry, engineering and medical units are expected to be repatriated in mid-August 1997, it is envisaged that MONUA will retain some 2,650 military personnel until the end of October. As currently planned, this downsizing, including that of the Mission's rapid reaction force, would resume at the end of October and would be completed in November 1997. The Brazilian medical units would be replaced by a military medical hospital provided by Portugal.

18. In the meantime, given the scope of its mandated tasks, MONUA has had once again to redeploy several military contingents within the Mission area. If the demobilization process does not proceed expeditiously, the military contingent of MONUA will not be capable of coping with the complex tasks still entrusted to it; this could jeopardize the implementation of the overall mandate of the Mission as well as the security and safety of United Nations personnel and property. The current strength of the Mission's military units is already barely sufficient to perform these absolutely essential functions and would not be adequate in the event of further deterioration of the security situation in Angola.

IV. POLICE ASPECTS

19. The civilian police observers of MONUA continued to monitor and verify the activities of the Angolan National Police in order to encourage its neutrality, to promote the free circulation of people and goods throughout Angola and to monitor the security arrangements made for UNITA leaders. They are also assisting government authorities in the normalization of State administration. In the few areas where the State administration has been expanded, no complaints against the police have been received so far despite the often uncooperative - and even hostile - attitude of UNITA militants.

20. Police observers continued to verify and monitor the activities of the 5,450 rapid reaction police, who remain quartered in 13 locations. Head counts and weapons verification are conducted twice a week, except in three locations in the Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul provinces where cooperation is lacking. During the reporting period, the Government deployed 424 rapid reaction police personnel in these two provinces without proper notification to MONUA and declared its intention to unilaterally terminate the quartering of the rapid reaction police nationwide. However, my Special Representative, with the support of the representatives of the observer States, impressed upon government authorities the potentially dangerous consequences that such a decision could produce. So far, the Government seems to have taken these concerns seriously, and I encourage it to continue this quartering exercise. However, military training of police personnel has taken place on several occasions in Lunda Norte province, signalling a possible attempt to prepare the civilian police for tasks not compatible with their normal duties.

21. The selection and integration of UNITA elements into the police has been concluded. A total of 524 UNITA personnel were selected for integration and 437 of them have been incorporated. In addition, of the 212 ex-UNITA officers selected to serve as government bodyguards to UNITA leaders, 178 have been actually incorporated into the police. UNITA also recently submitted a list of 22 senior officers for induction, all of whom have already arrived in Luanda.

22. The Government has temporarily suspended the process of disarmament of the civilian population pending the completion of the normalization of State administration, insisting that the civilian population in both Government and UNITA-controlled areas be disarmed simultaneously. It should be emphasized that possession of weapons by civilians, especially those who are members of the Civil Defence Corps, continues to pose a threat to the security situation. The free circulation of people and goods continues to be restricted by the maintenance of illegal checkpoints and the escalation of acts of banditry in various areas of the country. Some old checkpoints have recently been reactivated, while new ones are being set up in both government and UNITA areas as a result of the overall worsening of the military and political environment.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS

23. The Human Rights Unit of MONUA monitored developments in this important area and continued to promote human rights education in collaboration with national and international non-governmental organizations. In this context, a

seminar was organized in Benguela on 2 and 3 July 1997 to train human rights personnel. The Unit also participated actively in the sixth Conference of Ministers of Justice of Lusophone States, which was held in Luanda from 15 to 18 July 1997 to highlight the issues of juvenile delinquency and the plight of street children. With regard to allegations of human rights violations, six new cases have been submitted by MONUA to the ad hoc group of the Joint Commission. For their part, police observers have also investigated over 20 cases of alleged violations. In the meantime, prisons in Luanda have been visited by MONUA staff in the presence of government authorities. The activities of the Human Rights Unit have temporarily decreased following the departure of six human rights monitors provided by the European Union. However, steps are being taken to strengthen the Unit, and additional human rights monitors are expected to join MONUA in the near future. These steps will enable the Mission to shift its focus towards the human rights situation in the provinces.

VI. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

A. Relief and rehabilitation

24. Persistent tensions have resulted in increased insecurity in many parts of the country and have affected the activities of United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. The present security situation has already caused a shift in the focus from reconstruction and development to emergency assistance operations. Armed clashes have resulted in the displacement of more than 10,000 people in Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul provinces, and joint United Nations/non-governmental organization assessment missions have been conducted in order to respond to their needs. The World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Lutheran World Federation continue to provide assistance to internally displaced persons in Lunda Norte. WFP has strengthened its effort, with eight national staff now in Lunda Norte and four national staff in Lunda Sul. WFP staff have been harassed by FAA who searched their cars and a MONUA vehicle while the staff were carrying out humanitarian activities near Mbuia and Maludi (Lunda Norte). UNICEF, which joined the recent assessment mission to the north-eastern region headed by the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit, is supplying medical kits and conducting a vaccination campaign. Unfortunately, owing to an acute shortage of medical personnel and a severe lack of funds, only limited health assistance has been provided.

25. Owing to the prevalent conditions on the ground, staff of the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations have been unable to gain access to thousands of refugees who are reportedly stranded in several UNITA-controlled areas; despite numerous requests, United Nations agencies have not been granted necessary clearance. According to available information, there is a group of 2,000 refugees in Louva and more than 6,000 refugees in two other locations in the north-east. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also reported that a group of Rwandans and Burundese had recently arrived in Luau, a UNITA-controlled area in Moxico province. A joint assessment mission visited the area on 26 July and found some 1,500 men, women and children from Rwanda and Burundi. UNHCR and its implementing partners are already providing emergency assistance to these refugees.

26. Owing to the difficult financial situation, the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit has issued an urgent appeal to donors for funding of emergency response projects falling under the 1997 United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeal. The response to the appeal so far has been extremely disappointing, with only 20.6 per cent of the needs covered. At the national level, the Humanitarian Coordination Group was recently reactivated after consultations between the Ministry of Social Assistance and the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit. It is expected that the Group will serve as the focal point for the coordination of all humanitarian activities in the country and will act as the main decision-making body on policy and procedure.

B. Demobilization

27. Demobilization activities have been proceeding at a markedly slower pace than originally envisaged owing to the strained political and military atmosphere. The hostile attitude of local UNITA commanders and some officers of the Angolan National Police towards demobilization activities persists. As at 10 August 1997, a total of 21,175 UNITA soldiers have been demobilized within the framework of the rapid demobilization plan. It should be recalled that 2,124 UNITA and 330 FAA under-age troops were demobilized before the beginning of the plan, which brings the total demobilized soldiers in Angola to 23,629. The first phase of demobilization was successfully concluded in mid-June, with the closure of five selection and demobilization centres and one military war disabled centre. The second phase of demobilization was also completed by mid-July, with the closure of three other selection and demobilization centres and two military war disabled centres. Even though demobilization activities have now been completed in the Catala selection and demobilization centre and are ongoing in the Chitembo centre, there are still five selection and demobilization centres where demobilization has yet to commence.

28. The serious incidents experienced during the first and second phases of demobilization highlight the very negative impact that the worrisome political and military atmosphere in the country could have on the overall process. The Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit is also increasingly concerned about the post-demobilization phase, in particular the problems and impediments to social reintegration of ex-combatants, the regroupment of demobilized UNITA personnel into military or semi-military formations, as well as the withholding of demobilization benefits from ex-UNITA troops. In many instances, local UNITA authorities have also imposed last-minute changes in the destination of ex-combatants and limited access to them by humanitarian personnel. These practices are totally unacceptable and have seriously undermined the credibility of the entire demobilization process.

29. Under the rapid demobilization plan, a special policy was adopted for those UNITA personnel registered at selection and demobilization centres or special centres for the war-disabled who did not return to the centres in time for official demobilization. Under this policy, such personnel would lose entitlement to benefits provided by the international community (demobilization kits, food, etc.), but would retain legal benefits and the entitlement to a special subsidy from the Government. However, in the light of recent events, it would be prudent to suspend temporarily the establishment of this mechanism in

order to avoid the risk of double registration. With regard to the demobilization of additional UNITA armed personnel, as called for in resolution 1118 (1997), and in the light of experience to date, the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit believes that future demobilization activities should be radically simplified and conducted in a dynamic manner, after an in-depth evaluation of military and security aspects on the ground, in conjunction with adequate preparation and funding. The latter, as experience has shown, should not be dependent on voluntary contributions; given the critical nature of this exercise, it would be imperative to put it on a sound financial and organizational footing. Furthermore, humanitarian assistance should only focus on reintegration of demobilized soldiers.

30. The financial status of the demobilization process remains a matter of great concern. Out of total requirements of US$ 56.6 million, only $16.4 million has been received so far. In addition, only $5.5 million of the $26 million requested by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for demobilization activities has been received, undermining this crucial effort. IOM has so far assisted a total of 63,000 beneficiaries, but it cannot guarantee its ability to continue its operations in Angola beyond August 1997. While some pledges have recently been earmarked for the IOM transport programme, the Demobilization and Reintegration Office of the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit has received no major support from donors for 1997 demobilization activities.

C. Demining

31. There have been worrisome reports from international demining non-governmental organizations and the Angolan National Institute for the Removal of Unexploded Ordnance (INAROE) indicating a trend towards the resumption of mine laying in some parts of the country (see para. 13 above). Such incidents have been confirmed in the provinces of Malange, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul. During the reporting period, UNITA imposed additional restrictions on survey and other demining activities by international non-governmental organizations and INAROE. All these incidents have had serious repercussions on humanitarian activities and should be strongly censured.

32. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which assumed responsibility for the United Nations mine action programme in Angola, signed a two-year project document with the Government on 19 April 1997 which envisages the continuation of international support to INAROE. However, demining activities remain restricted to seven of Angola's 18 provinces owing to limited national capability and inadequate support structures. Of the 1,532 minefields identified, only 8 per cent, or a total of 111, have been cleared.

VII. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

33. The economic situation in the country remained very critical, reflecting the overall slowdown in economic activities. In line with the stated political, economic and social programme for 1997, the Government's budget during the reporting period was aimed at achieving adequate budgetary savings and securing

resources sufficient to finance its share of demobilization and other aspects of the peace process. However, owing to various pressures, the Government was compelled on 21 July, to devalue the national currency by 30 per cent as a means of raising domestic revenue and decreasing the gap between the official and parallel markets. The impact of the devaluation on the already high prices prevailing on local markets and on prices of imported goods is yet to be determined.

34. Meanwhile, available information indicates a continued downward trend in the rate of inflation. According to the National Institute of Statistics, as of August 1997, for the second month in a row, the inflation rate remained below 10 per cent. However, certain important policy measures, such as the phasing out of subsidies on petroleum, simplification of import licensing procedures and requirements, price controls and privatization of commercial banks, have not yet been implemented.

35. During the reporting period, the World Bank undertook a mission to Angola, following the visit in June 1997 of a delegation of the International Monetary Fund, in order to pursue dialogue with the Government on possible funding for specific projects and adjustment programmes. Many donor-financed projects related to community rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are gradually moving to the implementation stage, and the Government has shown keen interest in having donor commitments transformed into disbursements. However, serious delays in the normalization of State administration throughout the country is restricting the movement of goods and is impeding a return of the population to normal life. As a result, 64 per cent of the population is still living below the poverty line, and 21 per cent is living in extreme poverty.

36. With regard to capacity-building, the current priorities are the transfer of responsibility from the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit to the designated entities of the Angolan Government, the shift from emergency to development programming and the establishment of an integrated approach to community rehabilitation. The estimated cost to initiate these operations is US$ 2.3 million. At the same time, it would be essential to strengthen and support local non-governmental organizations to enable them to provide better services.

37. Almost two years after the September 1995 Brussels Round-table Conference, which generated approximately US$ 1 billion in pledges for the Community Rehabilitation Programme in Angola, only $6.8 million has been received from donor countries and organizations; an additional $2.5 million has been provided by UNDP. The rehabilitation programme is currently being conducted in six of the country's 18 provinces. So far, some $3 million has been disbursed from the Special Trust Fund established for this purpose. Fifteen projects, covering various sectors in Bengo, Benguela, Huambo, Uíge and Zaire provinces and costing a total of $1.5 million, have been submitted for approval.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

38. The peace process in Angola is experiencing some of the most serious difficulties since the signing of the Lusaka Protocol. The progress achieved

during the previous two and a half years is being severely undermined by persisting tensions throughout the country. I trust that the Government and UNITA fully realize the dangers involved in any further deterioration of the military situation. Everything possible should be done to reverse this ominous trend.

39. Both parties bear a heavy responsibility for the future of the peace process and must refrain from any action that might lead to renewed fighting. It is obvious that the current state of affairs is mainly the result of delays by UNITA in implementing its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol. The complete demilitarization of UNITA, the restoration of State administration throughout the country, the transformation of radio VORGAN into a non-partisan station and the true transformation of UNITA into a political party are imperatives for the implementation of the peace process. The international community expects no less than a credible and unconditional implementation by UNITA of these fundamental obligations. It should be noted that the immediate normalization of State administration is of crucial importance not only for the unity and territorial integrity of the country but also for the economic and social reconstruction of Angola.

40. The Security Council has been engaged in the pursuit of a comprehensive settlement in Angola for many years. I am confident that it will continue to exercise its authority and take all necessary steps to ensure full compliance with its decisions, including with the provisions of its resolution 1118 (1997) and the presidential statement of 23 July 1997 (S/PRST/1997/39). Last-minute half-hearted concessions by UNITA, under pressure and on the eve of Security Council deliberations, are no longer acceptable.

41. I continue to believe that an appropriately prepared meeting between President dos Santos and Mr. Savimbi could contribute significantly to the improvement of the political climate in the country and facilitate the successful completion of the peace process. I intend to encourage the parties to convene such a meeting as soon as possible.

42. In the meantime, it is my intention, with the concurrence of the Security Council, to further postpone the withdrawal of the United Nations military units from Angola and to retain in the country up to 2,650 military personnel until the end of October 1997. In taking this step, I have considered the prevailing precarious situation in Angola, the incomplete nature of the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, the need to give the parties an additional chance to complete the peace process, as well as the need to ensure the security of United Nations and other international personnel in Angola. I have also taken into account the expressed wish of the Government of Angola to maintain in the country a sizeable United Nations presence until the demobilization process is over. Needless to say, I will continue to review the pace of the drawdown of the military component of MONUA and adjust it, as necessary.

43. In conclusion, I should like to urge the parties, but in particular UNITA, to respect the safety and security of personnel of the United Nations, its programmes and agencies, as well as the staff of other international organizations who have been helping the Angolan people to achieve a long-awaited peace, national reconciliation and economic rehabilitation of the country.

Annex

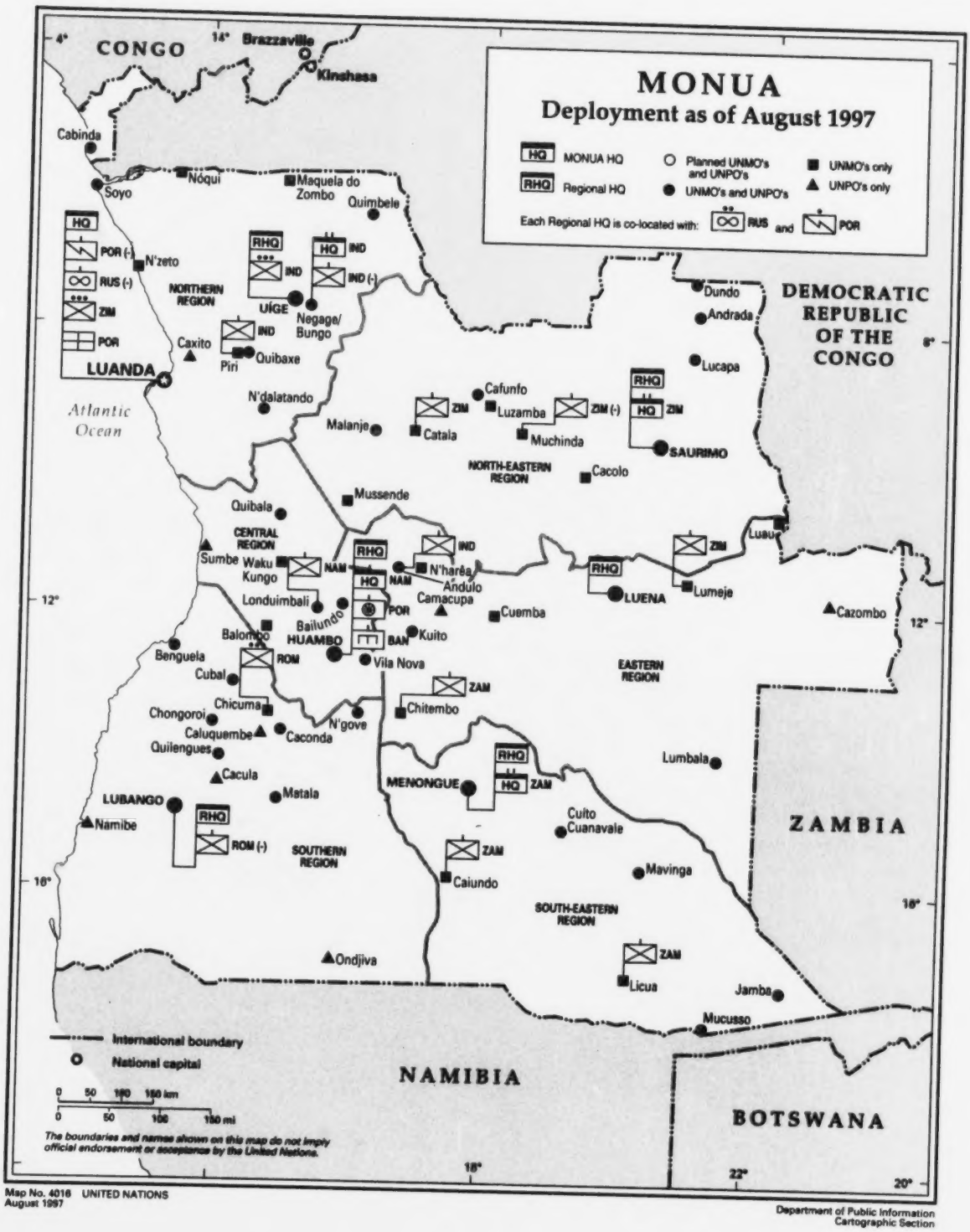
The United Nations Observer Mission in Angola: contributions as at 10 August 1997

Country	Military observers	Civilian police officers	Staff officers	Troops[a]	
Bangladesh	10	22	-	93	125
Brazil	19	14	3	45	81
Bulgaria	10	21	-	-	31
Congo, Republic of the	4	-	-	-	4
Egypt	10	19	1[b]	-	30
France	7	-	10[b]	-	17
Guinea-Bissau	3	4	-	-	7
Hungary	10	8	-	-	18
India	21	11	36	407	475
Jordan	17	21	1[b]	-	39
Kenya	10	-	-	-	10
Malaysia	19	20	-	-	39
Mali	9	15	-	-	24
Namibia	-	-	-	196	196
Netherlands	-	-	2[b]	-	2
New Zealand	3	-	4[b]	-	7
Nigeria	16	21	-	-	37
Norway	3	-	-	-	3
Pakistan	3	-	13[b]	-	16
Poland	5	-	-	-	5
Portugal	5	38	2	313	358
Romania	-	-	1	150	151
Russian Federation	3	-	2	130	135
Senegal	10	-	-	-	10
Slovakia	5	-	-	-	5
Sweden	3	20	-	-	23
Ukraine	5	-	1	1	7
United Republic of Tanzania	-	3	-	-	3
Uruguay	3	15	5[b]	-	23
Zambia	8	15	6	498	527
Zimbabwe	16	22	26	675	739
Total	237	274	113[c]	2 508	3 147

[a] Including military police.

[b] Including military specialists in the UNAVEM III demining school and in Quartering Area Administration.

[c] The total figure does not include the five demining experts seconded by Germany.


MONUA
Deployment as of August 1997
MONUA HQ
Regional HQ
Planned UNMO's and UNPO's
UNMO's and UNPO's
UNMO's only
UNPO's only
Each Regional HQ is co-located with: RUS and POR
CONGO
Brazzaville
Kinshasa
Cabinda
Soyo
Nóqui
Maquela do Zombo
Quimbele
N'zeto
NORTHERN REGION
UÍGE
Negage/ Bungo
Caxito
Piri
Quibaxe
LUANDA
Atlantic Ocean
N'dalatando
Malanje
Cafunfo
Luzamba
Catala
Muchinda
SAURIMO
Cacolo
NORTH-EASTERN REGION
Dundo
Andrada
Lucapa
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
Mussende
Quibala
CENTRAL REGION
Sumbe
Waku Kungo
Londuimbali
Bailundo
HUAMBO
Balombo
Benguela
Cubal
Chicuma
Chongoroi
Caluquembe
Caconda
Quilengues
Cacula
Matala
LUBANGO
Namibe
ROM (-)
SOUTHERN REGION
N'harea
Andulo
Camacupa
Cuemba
Kuito
Vila Nova
N'gove
Chitembo
LUENA
Lumeje
Luau
Cazombo
EASTERN REGION
Lumbala
MENONGUE
Cuito Cuanavale
Mavinga
Caiundo
SOUTH-EASTERN REGION
Ondjiva
Licua
Jamba
Mucusso
ZAMBIA
NAMIBIA
BOTSWANA
International boundary
National capital
0 50 100 150 km
0 50 100 150 mi
The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Map No. 4016 UNITED NATIONS
August 1997
Department of Public Information
Cartographic Section

UNITED
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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/641
13 August 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

LETTER DATED 12 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LUXEMBOURG TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement issued on 7 August 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union on sending observers to monitor the elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jean-Louis WOLZFELD
Permanent Representative of
Luxembourg to the United Nations

97-21775 (E) 140897 140897

/...

Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement issued on 7 August 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union on sending observers to monitor the elections in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

With reference to the terms of its demarche in Belgrade on 16 July and its declaration of 31 July 1997, the EU fully endorses the declaration by the President-in-Office of the OSCE, published in Copenhagen on 5 August 1997, on sending observers to the elections in the FRY.

The EU calls on the FRY authorities to accept the offer of bona fide monitoring of the legislative and presidential elections in the FRY by the OSCE. It points out that the OSCE and the ODIHR are the right bodies to monitor elections, including elections held in the FRY. Furthermore, its is for the ODIHR to decide freely on the composition of its teams of observers.

The EU rejects the selective approach of the FRY authorities. It calls on them to invite the OSCE in, without any conditions as to what it may or may not do.

The EU stresses the need for monitoring of the electoral process on the basis of internationally recognized standards, taking in the entire process, including freedom of expression and information, and for equal access for all parties to the media, in particular in the run-up to the elections. In this context, the EU reaffirms the need for full and swift implementation of the recommendations contained in the Gonzalez report.

The EU urges the FRY to take advantage of the OSCE's offer of assistance to ensure that the poll is fair.

By guaranteeing free and democratic elections, the FRY will show its determination to make a clear commitment to the path of democracy and the rule of law, thus contributing to its full integration into the international community.

UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/642
13 August 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 13 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 12 August 1997 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the attempts of the United States Administration to defame Iraq in order to prolong the embargo that has been maintained against the country for the past seven years.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

97-21781 (E) 140897 140897

/...

Annex

Letter dated 12 August 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to call your attention to the attempts of the United States Administration to defame Iraq and to create incidents in order to be able to claim that Iraq is violating the requirements of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The purpose of these attempts on the part of the United States is to prolong the embargo that has been maintained against Iraq for the past seven years.

The 31 July 1997 message to Congress from United States President Clinton concerning what he calls "the national emergency with respect to Iraq" contains in its third paragraph allegations to the effect that Iraq tried to obtain zirconium ingots from the United States of America in violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and the Iraqi Sanctions Regulations (ISR). I here quote a paragraph from that message:

> "On July 10, 1995, an indictment was brought against three United States citizens in the Eastern District of New York for conspiracy in a case involving the attempted exportation and transshipment to Iraq of zirconium ingots in violation of the IEEPA and the ISR. The intended use of the merchandise was the manufacture of cladding for radioactive materials to be used in nuclear reactors. The case was the culmination of a successful undercover operation conducted by agents of the United States Customs Service in New York in cooperation with the Office of Foreign Assets Control and the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York. On February 6, 1997, one of the defendants pled guilty to a 10-count criminal indictment including conspiracy to violate the Iraqi Sanctions and the IEEPA. The trial of the remaining defendants is ongoing."

In order to present facts that will refute the allegations made in the message, I should like to refer to information published by American and other news media, including The New York Times in its issue for 9 June 1995, to the effect that United States Government agents posed as Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials in order to entrap three suspected arms dealers who tried to export eight tons of zirconium in violation of the sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations. The New York Times states as follows:

> "Three men from Queens and Long Island, apparently in collusion with a Russian general, smuggled nearly eight tons of material used in nuclear reactors from a military stockpile in Ukraine, stored most of it in a warehouse in Queens and spread the word that they would sell it to the highest bidder, Federal officials said yesterday.
>
> "The men were arrested after a yearlong sting operation in which United States Customs agents posed as Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials and European arms dealers planning to buy the zirconium, a non-radioactive material that is useful in nuclear fission. They are charged with trying

to export the zirconium illegally to Iraq, in violation of the United Nations sanctions against Iraq, augmented by American law, which prohibit all trade with Iraq except for humanitarian items."

This deliberate affront to Iraq's reputation, cited as evidence by the United States President and used in a message to Congress, only confirms the deception and distortion of facts in which the United States Administration engages against Iraq in order to perpetuate the unjust embargo.

If this is the true nature of the United States policy against Iraq, which has gone to such an extreme that the President of the United States of America contributes to it through the messages he sends to the United States Congress, then one has to wonder how many times over the past seven years the United States Administration has contrived allegations and lies for submission to the Security Council and other bodies in order to unleash against Iraq more fabricated crises. They must indeed have been very numerous.

Iraq has on dozens of occasions called attention to this state of affairs, one that is of unparalleled clarity in the present case. The United States President himself, in a message to the Congress of the United States, relates a fabricated story that has the purpose of raising an accusation against Iraq in order to justify the maintenance of the embargo when it is merely a matter of an entrapment operation whose protagonists are United States Government agents posing as Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials. The United States President says in his message, however, that it was "a successful undercover operation" without regard for the fact that this constitutes deception of the Congress of the United States and of American public opinion.

Let me assure you once again that Iraq denies any connection or association with the false claims and allegations made in President Clinton's message and that it places responsibility squarely on the United States Administration. That Administration pursues such a policy in order to impugn Iraq's reputation and cast doubt on its fulfilment of the requirements of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly those relating to the weapons prohibited under section C of resolution 687 (1991).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq

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Security Council

Distr.
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S/1997/643
13 August 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

TWENTY-FOURTH PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1116 (1997) of 27 June 1997, in which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 30 September 1997, in the expectation that it would terminate on that date. In that resolution, the Council also requested me to keep it informed on a regular basis on the situation in Liberia and, in particular, developments in the electoral process, and to submit a report by 29 August 1997.

2. The present report describes the preparations for and conduct of the 19 July Liberian elections and the progress of the withdrawal of UNOMIL, as well as the initial views of the new Government concerning a post-UNOMIL presence of the United Nations in Liberia.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

3. The Liberian peace process came to a successful conclusion during the reporting period with the holding of presidential and legislative elections on 19 July 1997, as scheduled, and the installation of the new Government on 2 August 1997. The electoral process and the installation of a democratically elected Government constituted the last item on the revised schedule of implementation of the Abuja Agreement (S/1995/742, annex) under the peace plan for Liberia of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

4. As described in section IV below, the entire electoral process was organized and conducted by the Liberian Independent Elections Commission in an impartial and transparent manner, with the assistance of UNOMIL, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the European Union (EU) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, which, in a coordinated effort, pooled their logistical, communications and transport resources as well as their technical expertise to support the process. States members of ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), donor

countries and the Liberian Council of State provided generous financial, material and technical assistance.

5. The Joint Electoral Coordination Mechanism of ECOWAS and the United Nations, which was established during the reporting period, greatly assisted in the harmonization of electoral preparations. The Joint Mechanism held regular meetings with the Independent Elections Commission and key operational actors in order to keep the electoral process on track and to ensure that operational requirements were met. OAU delegations that visited Liberia during the reporting period worked closely with the Joint Mechanism. The United Nations and ECOWAS jointly certified the voter registration and the election results through the Joint Mechanism.

6. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, as well as the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, representing the ECOWAS Committee of Nine on Liberia, visited Liberia during the final week of the electoral preparations to ascertain the status of the arrangements for polling day. The Ministers remained in the country throughout the elections and my Special Representative also maintained close contacts with them. He also consulted closely with former President Jimmy Carter as well as the OAU and EU delegations during the election period.

7. A total of 13 political parties fielded candidates for the presidential and legislative elections. The parties started their electoral campaigning on 16 June 1997 as scheduled under the electoral calendar. The campaign was conducted without major incidents of violence or intimidation, and the Liberian people were able freely to associate themselves with political parties of their choice. The Independent Elections Commission, having investigated the few incidents reported to it, determined that there was no evidence to suggest organized or widespread acts of violence or intimidation.

8. The final result of the election was announced on 24 July, giving the National Patriotic Party (NPP) 75.3 per cent, the Unity Party (UP) 9.5 per cent and the All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP) 4 per cent of the national vote. The Alliance and United People's Party (UPP) each received approximately 2.5 per cent, while the remaining eight parties received less than 2 per cent of the vote each. Voter turnout for the election was approximately 85 per cent of registered voters.

9. Mr. Charles Ghankay Taylor was elected President, and his National Patriotic Party won 21 of the 26 Senate seats, and 49 of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives. UP leads the opposition with three and seven seats in each chamber respectively. ALCOP entered, and subsequently withdrew, a formal complaint about irregularities in the conduct of elections in three counties and the allocation of seats, the modalities of which had previously been agreed upon by all the political parties and which were provided for in the electoral law. To date ALCOP and UPP have not filled their seats in the legislature and continue to dispute the method of allocation of seats.

10. On 2 August 1997, Mr. Taylor was inaugurated as President of Liberia, and Mr. Enoch Dogolea as Vice-President. In his inaugural address, the President emphasized reconciliation, the protection of human rights, national unity and

the urgent need for the reconstruction of Liberia's shattered economy, infrastructure and institutions. The President paid tribute to the role played by ECOWAS and ECOMOG in bringing peace to Liberia and to the contribution made by the United Nations and the wider international community.

11. The inauguration ceremonies were witnessed by the current Chairman of ECOWAS and Head of State of Nigeria, General Sani Abacha, and by the Heads of State of Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Niger, as well as the Prime Ministers of Benin and Togo, the Vice President of Gambia and the Chairman of the Council of State of Ghana. The Heads of State of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, South Africa, the United States of America and Zimbabwe were represented by special envoys. Delegations were also sent from OAU and EU, and representatives from other Member States were present. In addition to my Special Representative, the United Nations was also represented by Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who travelled to Monrovia as my Special Envoy.

12. UNOMIL has now begun withdrawing its personnel from Liberia. The bridging activities designed as an interim measure to absorb demobilized combatants have been transferred from the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office to the relevant agencies and are now being dovetailed into the reintegration programme. My Special Representative is expected to depart on 30 September 1997, at the end of the Mission's mandate.

13. On 3 August, my Special Envoy and my Special Representative for Liberia were received by President Taylor. The President again emphasized the importance of encouraging reconciliation, protecting human rights, establishing a broad-based and inclusive Government and undertaking the task of national reconstruction. President Taylor requested the assistance of the United Nations in mobilizing international support for the reconstruction of his country. He expressed his desire for a continued United Nations presence following the termination of the UNOMIL mandate on 30 September. Further consultations will be conducted with the Government on the details and modalities for establishing such a presence, and I expect to be in a position to report back to the Council with concrete recommendations prior to the termination of the UNOMIL mandate.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

14. Relative peace and stability have continued to prevail throughout Liberia since the issuance of my previous report dated 19 June 1997 (S/1997/478). The electoral campaigns of the political parties and the polling process were conducted in a secure environment guaranteed by ECOMOG.

15. The situation in Sierra Leone remains a potential threat to Liberia's stability. Outbreaks of heavy fighting on 6 and 10 July 1997 in south-eastern Sierra Leone, just across the border from the Liberian town of Bo Waterside, caused an influx of a large number of refugees into Liberia. The refugees included about 200 Kamajor militiamen, who were disarmed by ECOMOG. The fighting also resulted in casualties among Liberian civilians, who were evacuated by UNOMIL to hospitals in Monrovia. During the fighting, the UNOMIL field station at Bo was relocated to Sinje.

16. There has been no increase in the cumulative total of arms and ammunition recovered and verified by UNOMIL from the totals mentioned in my previous report. However, ECOMOG has reported that its cordon-and-search operations have led to the recovery of approximately 3,750 additional assorted weapons and 152,500 pieces of ammunition since the end of the official disarmament exercise in February. UNOMIL is currently discussing with the new Government and ECOMOG the issue of the custody of the weapons collected during the official disarmament exercise.

17. UNOMIL has now closed its field stations and has begun to repatriate the military observers. As at 15 August, 59 of the 93 military observers had been repatriated (see annex). The repatriation process is expected to be completed by 19 August.

IV. ELECTORAL PROCESS

Overview of the electoral process

18. On 24 July, following the official announcement of the results of the elections, I wrote to the President of the Security Council providing a description and overall assessment of the electoral process (S/1997/581). I recalled the publication of the United Nations recommendations on a framework for the holding of elections in Liberia on 10 February 1997; the establishment of the Independent Elections Commission on 2 April; and the adoption of a special elections law by the ECOWAS leaders at an extraordinary summit meeting held at Abuja, Nigeria, on 21 May 1997, following consultations with the Liberian political parties.

19. In the same letter, I also noted that, despite initial difficulties, the Independent Elections Commission had succeeded in registering more than 750,000 voters and that the large number of registration sites and their wide distribution throughout the country had afforded Liberians a fair and adequate opportunity to register themselves for the elections. I further noted that a vigorous campaign had been conducted by the political parties in a generally civil and peaceful atmosphere and that political parties had been free to travel and open offices in all parts of the country.

20. I also related the activities and findings of the 317 medium-term and short-term electoral observers UNOMIL had deployed throughout the 13 counties of Liberia. Although the Independent Elections Commission had originally envisaged establishing 1,864 polling stations, it eventually opened a total of 1,761 stations, of which UNOMIL observers visited 1,570. Both short-term and medium-term electoral observers have now been withdrawn and repatriated.

21. With respect to the conduct of the polling, I noted that voter turnout had been high, that no serious incidents had been reported and that it had been the assessment of UNOMIL observers that all eligible Liberians had been afforded a fair opportunity to vote for the political party of their choice. I reported to the Council that counting had taken place at polling stations immediately after the close of voting, and that that had been done with full transparency in the presence of party agents and national and international observers.

22. The tabulation of results, which was conducted by the Independent Elections Commission in Monrovia, had likewise been carried out in the presence of party agents and national and international observers, and the results announced were in accordance with the votes cast. I further informed the Council in my letter of 24 July that, earlier that day, I had issued a statement jointly with the Chairman of ECOWAS certifying that the electoral process had been credible and transparent, and certifying the elections as having been free and fair.

United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia and other assistance to the Independent Elections Commission

23. While the organization and conduct of the electoral process were the responsibility of the Independent Elections Commission, the Commission received considerable technical, logistical and organizational assistance from ECOWAS and ECOMOG, the United Nations, EU, the United States and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. UNOMIL observed and verified all stages of the electoral process and provided logistical support to the Commission from its inception until the final tabulation of votes. UNOMIL staff in the field were called upon to assist the Commission to a greater extent than initially envisaged, as the Commission's county magistrates and coordinators relied upon UNOMIL for transport and communications equipment, as well as technical advice and assistance.

24. UNOMIL, the European Commission, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and ECOMOG also worked in concert to assist the Independent Elections Commission with the deployment of polling materials. The Commission's preparations for polling day benefited greatly from the assistance provided and from the experience gained during the registration process, and were markedly more effective. The polling staff had remained in the field from the registration period, while polling materials were brought into the country in advance of polling day, and deployed successfully in time to begin polling on the morning of 19 July. UNOMIL also assisted the Commission with its International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT) communications to and from the field.

25. UNOMIL employed the services of an expert to conduct the "quick count" to which I referred in my previous report (S/1997/478, para. 21), and which has proved useful in similar circumstances in helping to defuse tensions immediately following the election. The quick count was calculated on the basis of a random sample of polling stations and was notified to my Special Representative within six hours of the closing of the polls. My Special Representative shared the results of the quick count with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Chief Tom Ikimi, in his capacity as Special Envoy of the Chairman of ECOWAS, and with former President Jimmy Carter. The results were consistent with the final official results announced by the Independent Elections Commission four days later.

Public information support for the electoral process

26. Through its Public Information Unit, UNOMIL undertook civic and voter education activities in support of the registration and voting process. UNOMIL-originated radio programming aired four times weekly on each of eight

functioning radio stations. The programmes were simulcast where stations had both frequency modulation (FM) and short wave (SW) transmission facilities. In addition to interviews and electoral updates, the programmes featured short dramatizations of electoral scenarios using an all-Liberian cast and characters derived from a cartoon series commissioned by UNOMIL.

27. The cartoon series played a central role in the Public Information Unit's voter education activities and was widely distributed. According to reports from many electoral observers, the cartoon messages, on such issues as the secrecy of the vote, proportional representation and voter registration, were often the only voter education materials seen in circulation.

28. Leaflets explaining proportional representation and voter registration were also published, as well as statements by my Special Representative on the importance of registering and voting. A message from UNOMIL appeared in the newspapers on the eve of the election reminding Liberians of their civic duty to vote and urging a spirit of tolerance and respect for opposing points of view. The Public Information Unit published newsletters highlighting different aspects of the electoral process, including the logistical arrangements that went into the registration process. Other articles focused on community-level contributions by UNOMIL military observers and the Mission's human rights mandate.

29. The Public Information Unit and electoral observers in the field also collaborated with UNDP and the non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground in distributing some 5,500 non-battery FM/SW radios throughout the country in order to increase awareness of the electoral process.

Certification

30. As was clearly shown by reports from the UNOMIL observers and those of other international organizations and non-governmental organizations, the 1997 Liberian elections met international standards for democratic elections. The Chairman of ECOWAS and I jointly issued a statement on 24 July (see S/1997/581, annex) certifying the 1997 elections as reflecting the will of the Liberian voters, and the process as a whole as free, fair and credible. We congratulated the Liberian people for demonstrating their commitment to peace and their desire for the establishment of a democratically elected Government.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

31. During the period under review, UNOMIL conducted a series of assessment missions to monitor the human rights situation in the countryside. No major human rights violations committed by Liberians were confirmed during these missions.

32. In pursuance of its capacity-building mandate and in the run-up to the elections, UNOMIL collaborated with the Carter Center to provide a one-week training programme, from 18 to 25 June, for the Liberia Human Rights Centre and representatives of other Liberian human rights organizations. Sixty representatives of 12 organizations received certificates of participation at

the end of the exercise. The Liberia Human Rights Centre and other national organizations actively participated in observing and monitoring all aspects of the elections and have reported their general satisfaction with the conduct of the exercise.

33. In my previous report, I referred to an investigation conducted by UNOMIL into allegations that ECOMOG soldiers were responsible for the death of an individual killed during a cordon-and-search operation at Lajoy gold mine in Grand Cape Mount County on 10 May 1997. While persons claiming to have witnessed the incident have testified to the existence of a burial site, the absence of a forensic pathologist in the country rendered exhumation and further investigation impossible. Reports were also received from persons claiming to have witnessed an incident on 18 May 1997, in which ECOMOG soldiers allegedly beat a man to death in Bong County while interrogating him about allegations that he possessed a hunting weapon. In this case too, further verification was impossible in the absence of a pathologist.

34. I also indicated in my previous report that I would consult with the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Commission for Human Rights that the United Nations Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat should provide advisory services and technical assistance to the new Government of Liberia to assist it in reviving the country's human rights structures. I am encouraged by President Taylor's commitment to the establishment of a national human rights commission, and by the repeated emphasis he has placed on the protection of human rights, both in his public statements and in his private discussions with my Special Envoy and Special Representative. I welcome this positive approach and look forward to discussing with the new Government at the earliest possible opportunity how the United Nations can best assist Liberia in fulfilling these goals.

VI. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

35. Emergency needs in Liberia are likely to continue to be great for the remainder of the year. At the same time, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and major donors are reorienting their activities better to address longer-term rehabilitation requirements in agriculture, education, health and infrastructure.

36. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has updated its operational plan for the repatriation and reintegration of Liberian refugees. The expected increase in stability following the elections is likely to prompt greater numbers of refugees to return, and UNHCR will continue to facilitate voluntary repatriation.

37. There are an estimated 130,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia. UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) provide care and maintenance for an estimated 30,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Montserrado County (Monrovia) and about 10,000 in Grand Cape Mount County. As a result of the situation in Sierra Leone, UNHCR has now halted all assistance to voluntary repatriation to that country.

38. All funds earmarked for the bridging operations of the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office, $3.3 million from the assessed budget and $500,000 from the Government of the United States, have been committed. The Office supported 50 projects, in which an estimated 10,000 fighters and civilians are engaged. Other bridging activities were undertaken by the United Nations Office for Project Services, UNDP and EU. As planned, the responsibility of administering and monitoring the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Office projects to completion was transferred to UNDP/United Nations Office for Project Services in July. Projects that are being implemented by United Nations agencies will be monitored and administered by the agencies themselves.

39. Despite several initial problems emanating from a lack of funds or delays in providing funds, together with coordination difficulties, the bridging programme has played a crucial role in the peace process of Liberia by employing approximately 15,000 ex-fighters including those mentioned in paragraph 38 above. This has kept them away from activities that could have undermined security during the electoral process. Bridging projects have also assisted in the restoration of essential services, such as schools, clinics, agriculture and public works, to many localities and in the rehabilitation of several rural roads and bridges.

VII. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

40. Since the end of the disarmament exercise in February 1997, United Nations agencies have been major partners in the consolidation of peace and preparations for the return to normality in Liberia. Their activities are now focusing on two main areas: the resettlement and reintegration of the population and the preparation of a rehabilitation and reconstruction plan.

41. The United Nations, through its Secretariat and specialized agencies and programmes, including UNDP, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the International Labour Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, is working closely with ministries of the Liberian Government on a number of projects designed to restore government functions and create jobs. Furthermore, given their paramount importance in the recovery of the country, the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare and Education are being provided with additional resources to complete an assessment of the rehabilitation needs for their respective sectors.

VIII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

42. In its resolution 51/3 C of 13 June 1997, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of $20,447,100 gross to be assessed at a monthly rate of $1,703,925 gross ($1,576,525 net) for the maintenance of UNOMIL for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, subject to the extension of the mandate of UNOMIL by the Security Council. Based on Security Council resolution 1116 (1997), assessments on Member States have been made until 30 September 1997. Upon the expiration of the mandate of UNOMIL, the resource requirements for its liquidation and administrative closing will be presented to the Assembly.

43. As at 30 June 1997, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIL special account since the inception of the Mission amounted to some $16.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at 30 June 1997 was $1,673.0 million.

44. Since my previous report, the Government of Japan has made a further contribution of $509,000 to the Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Cotonou Agreement in Liberia, earmarked for election-related activities. The Government of Switzerland has also donated 50,000 Swiss francs for civic education activities.

IX. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

45. With the establishment of a democratically elected Government in Liberia, the principal objective of UNOMIL has now been achieved. I congratulate ECOWAS and ECOMOG, which played a leading role in bringing peace to Liberia through a successful partnership with the United Nations. I also wish to express my appreciation to all Member States that have contributed to the process, whether bilaterally or through the Trust Fund. Above all, however, the credit goes to the Liberian people, who, through the electoral process, demonstrated their commitment to peace and their desire for the establishment of a democratically elected Government in their country.

46. In keeping with Security Council resolution 1116 (1997), the mandate of UNOMIL will expire on 30 September. The withdrawal of UNOMIL personnel is already under way and should be substantially completed by that date, leaving a small team to complete the usual liquidation and closing process. Pending further consultations with the Government of Liberia, it would be my intention to recommend the establishment of a peace-building support office to succeed UNOMIL after 30 September. I am convinced that such a presence could greatly assist the new Government in its efforts for reconciliation and reconstruction and contribute to promoting peace and stability in the region. Following consultations with the Liberian Government, and taking into account the views of a number of ECOWAS Governments, I intend to submit a further report to the Security Council shortly, before the end of the UNOMIL mandate, with proposals for the structure, staffing and functions of a United Nations presence in Liberia after UNOMIL.

47. In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to my Special Representative, Mr. Tuliameni Kalomoh, as well as to the Chief Military Observer, Major-General Sikandar Shami, and to all the civilian and military personnel of UNOMIL, past and present, for the important contribution they made, in close cooperation with ECOWAS and ECOMOG, to the cause of peace and democracy in Liberia.

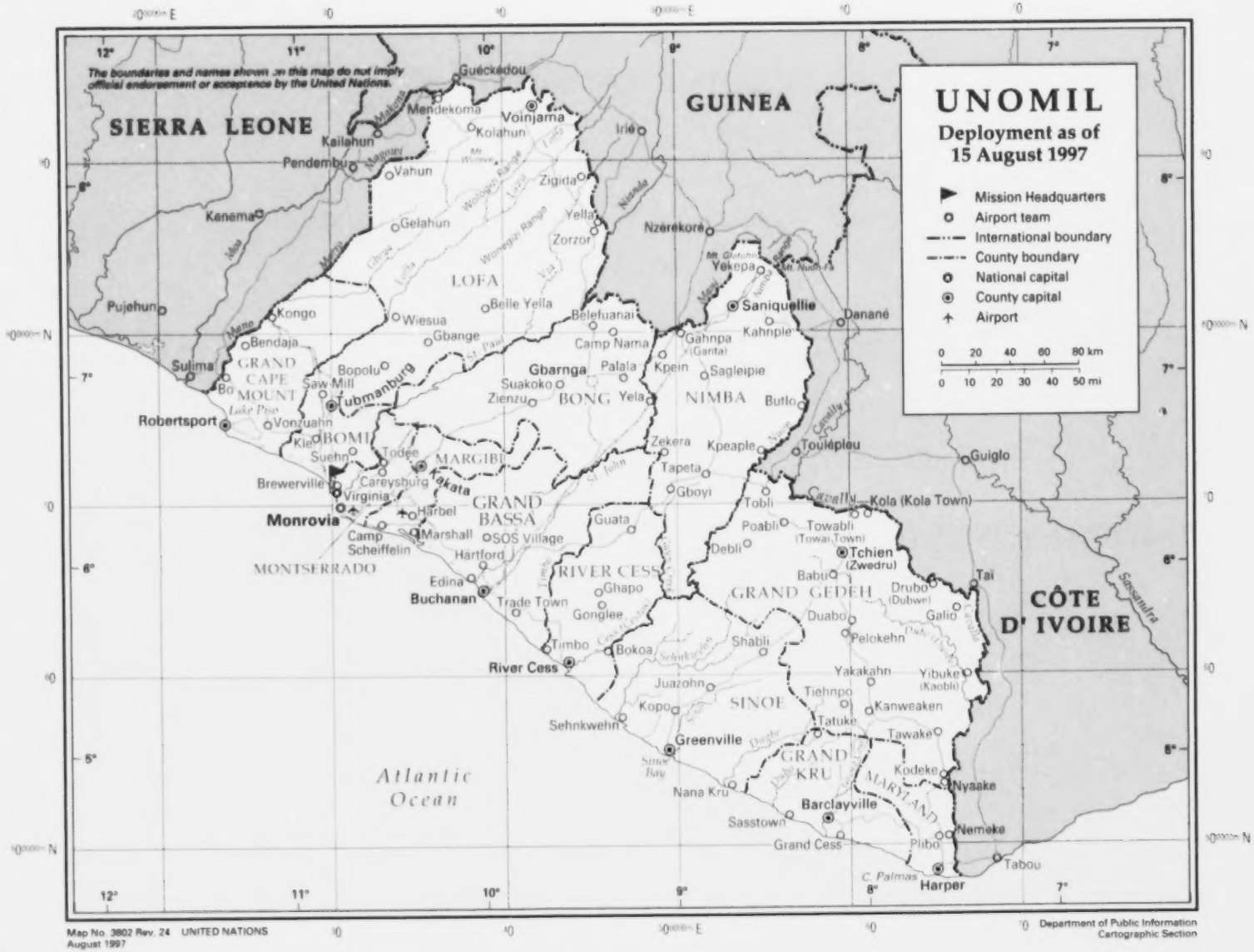
Annex

Composition of the military component of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia as at 15 August 1997

	Military observers	Others[a]	Total
Bangladesh	2	4	6
China	3	-	3
Czech Republic	3	-	3
Egypt	4	-	4
India	3	-	3
Kenya	5	-	5
Malaysia	-	-	-
Nepal	1	-	1
Pakistan	9[b]	-	9
Uruguay	-	-	-
Total	30	4	34

[a] Medical staff.

[b] Including the Chief Military Observer.



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